Australian Garden HISTORY

vol. 33, no. 2, October 2021

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AGHS—promoting awareness and conservation of significant gardens and cultural landscapes

Editorial

Francesca Beddie

The Australian National Trust movement, with which the Australian Garden History Society is affiliated, was established in New South Wales in 1945. Its 75th anniversary celebrations in 2020 were, like so much else, scuttled by the pandemic. We are, nevertheless, delighted to be able to mark the occasion with an article by Graham Quint, who reflects on the anniversary and the 40 years he spent working for the Trust. His article, as well as Elizabeth Teeland's on bushcare in the suburbs of Brisbane, show how much conservation can be achieved at the community level, especially when there are good links into broader advocacy movements and government-funded initiatives.

So, individuals can effect change. That's also the message in a book for children that explains climate change and offers them ideas for action. It is reviewed on page 27. You may think it a good addition to Christmas stockings. Before then, in November, world leaders will be gathering at the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties in Glasgow. They do so in the wake of the most sobering report yet by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which makes the Glasgow goal of reducing carbon emissions to net zero by 2050 all the more pressing. Much of the action required to do that demands national leadership and policy change. Glasgow's second goal – that we adapt to protect communities and natural habitats – is more within ordinary people's reach. As you will see in these pages, we can each help to protect and restore ecosystems. Thinking about this, I was struck by the value of images in helping to tell factual stories of destruction and renewal, as well as demonstrating the awe the natural world has inspired for millennia.

Discussing ideas about the landscape, John Dwyer argues that, in terms of the natural/cultural division, Australia has the oldest cultural landscapes in the world. This point is pertinent in the *Dark Emu* debate, reignited recently by anthropologist Peter Sutton and archaeologist Keryn Walshe. Another view on the debate, put forward by Professor of Creative Writing, Stephen Muecke, is that we need to combine western science and Indigenous knowledge to become what Sutton and Walshe call 'skilled ecological agents'. The Aboriginal notion of caring for country is helpful here, showing through the totemic kinship relations humans have with honey-ants, pelicans, rivers and so on, it is the interrelationships with nature that must be maintained because they are more permanent than our own brief lives.

Also important is to make science visible. This can be done in all sorts of ways: from honouring botanists on street signs to issuing gorgeous stamps featuring botanical art.

To borrow a phrase from Trisha Dixon, who is featured on the back cover, those of us interested in garden history are 'really gardeners of the mind'. I hope this issue gives much food for thought in these troubled times.

Scaling the giants: Aboriginal people are thought to have cut toe holes in the bunya pines to collect nuts, photo Francesca Beddie

Cover photo Supervising clearing land for an orchard shed: William Thorp Raleigh, owner of *Goronga*, 1907, photo courtesy Elizabeth Fraser

Australian Garden History

quarterly journal of the Australian Garden History Society

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B Peakhurst West Public School November 1989

C Peakhurst West Public School, first plantings 1990

D TV gardening presenter Graham Ross (right) opened the rainforest area in 1995 when Peakhurst West was celebrating its 40th anniversary. Myall, Jenny and Graham Quint on the left

All photos courtesy Graham Quint

Graham Quint

FORMER DIRECTOR, CONSERVATION WITH THE NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (NSW)

Landscape conservation

Forty years with the National Trust

Following my retirement in mid-2020, the same year the National Trust (NSW) turned 75, it's been interesting to look back on four decades at the National Trust, and the evolution of my work conserving native bushland, the natural environmental heritage, trees, parks and gardens.

Before joining the National Trust, I had worked for 16 years in local government and had professional qualifications in accountancy. My wife Jenny – we married in 1974 – and I share a love of bushwalking and photographing Australian native plants. We live in the south of Sydney, close to the Georges River. For me, it was a chance meeting with nature writer Alan Fairley in Oatley Park that opened my eyes to the world of native orchids. Alan pointed out some tiny greenhood orchids growing along one of the tracks in the park. I began devouring every book on native plants I could find, particularly botanical keys to plant identification.

I was fascinated by the diversity of plants endemic to the Sydney Basin and especially botanical differences between species of native grasses, orchids and rainforest trees.

This led to my entire family growing native trees and shrubs for the council tree give-away. Our three boys went to Peakhurst West public school, which had a planting project where all the children would take their turn to plant Australian rainforest trees on the school grounds adjoining Henry Lawson Drive to create a visual barrier from six lanes of traffic. After 25 years this is now a major rainforest plantation with numerous rare species.

Looking back, a combination of happenstance and serendipity nudged me towards the new field of bush regeneration. A request in the mid-1970s to attend a rubbish clean up for a few hours in the bushland on the eastern arm of Lime Kiln Bay Creek led to 15 years of weekly volunteer work on a bush regeneration project with the Lime Kiln Bay Preservation Society. The then State Pollution Control Commission had placed a ban on councils creating garbage tips in the local bays along the Georges River. Although Lime Kiln Bay was thus saved from becoming a rubbish dump, it was heavily silted and infested with weeds such as willow, privet and lantana. The locals decided it needed some loving care, so every Sunday morning we would put in a morning weeding the bushland. The area is now a beautiful wetland.

The National Trust (NSW)

Keen to learn about the work of bush regeneration pioneers, Joan and Eileen Bradley, the Lime Kiln Bay Preservation Society joined a Hurstville City Council delegation to see how regeneration was being undertaken in Lane Cove. On that visit I met Evelyn Hickey (née Bloom) who had initiated the National Trust's Bush Regeneration Program, which in turn led to me starting work with the Trust in 1981. Initially, I had two roles: to assist in the preparation of bushland plant surveys and to work for the Trust's Coastal Conservation Committee, an offshoot of the Trust's Landscape Conservation Committee formed in the early 1950s. There I met people from the Trust's earliest days, including Ivor Wyatt, the son of the National Trust's founder Annie Wyatt.

The National Trust in New South Wales (the first National Trust in Australia) commenced operations in 1945, with an emphasis on saving Sydney's sandstone buildings and native bushland. The first property the National Trust took on was Montague Island with its penguin colony on the state's south coast.

The NSW Trust has always had a deep concern to protect natural areas and landscapes. Among its first listings on the National Trust Register were

Top Peakhurst West Public School arboretum today, photo Graham Quint

Bottom Joan Bradley, 1974, image courtesy of the National Trust of Australia (NSW)

In the late 1960s, Joan and Eileen Bradley developed the Bradley method of bush regeneration, with three principles: work outward from less infested to more seriously infested areas; minimise disturbance, and replace topsoil and litter; allow regeneration to set the pace of the work.

the entrances to Botany Bay and the Hawkesbury. Following a long campaign in collaboration with other conservation groups including the National Parks Association and the Nature Conservation Council of NSW, Myall Lakes were saved from sand mining and the Myall Lakes National Park was established in 1972.

One of the most important landscape listings was the Holsworthy Landscape Conservation Area, entered onto the Register in 1997 when it was being proposed as a potential site for Sydney's second international airport. With its deep gorges, rare and endangered fauna and flora species such as platypus, and decades of unexploded ordnance, it is difficult to conceive of a more unsuitable site for an airport.

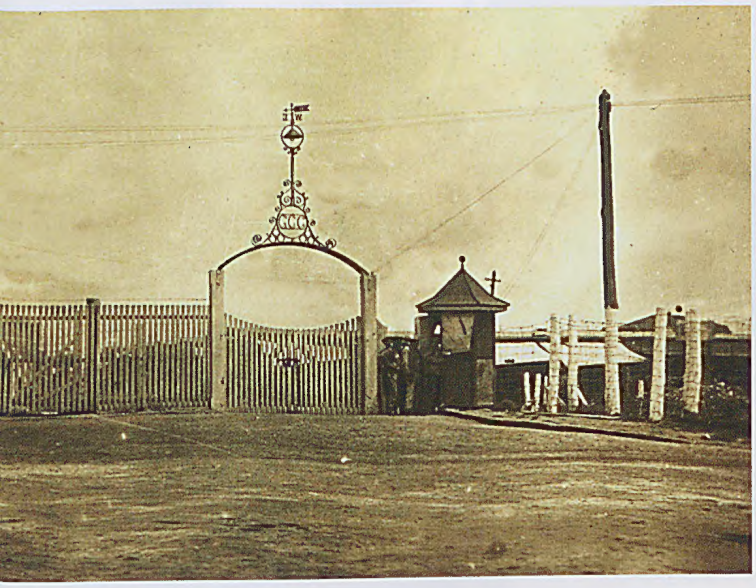
While including a landscape on the National Trust Register does not give it a statutory heritage listing, it does signal that the Trust believes the place worthy of recognition for its historic, social, cultural, aesthetic, natural and cultural significance. The research supporting these listings can then be used to lobby for the protection and sensitive management of these lands, which may in time be added to local council heritage lists or listed on the State Heritage Register or the National Heritage List. Some places such as the north coast rainforests and the Blue Mountains valleys originally listed on the National Trust Register have now been listed as World Heritage.

Conservation work

My first Coastal Conservation Committee task was a survey of 198 New South Wales coastal headlands, from Queensland to the Victorian border. With a brand-new, sky-blue Nissan Urvan, Jenny and I headed out on a six-week survey to list native and weed species and note the zoning, erosion and other degradation for each of these headlands.

As the Bush Regeneration Program grew during the 1980s, I carried out similar surveys of the bushland in Sydney local government areas. I also ventured to places such as a rainforest park in Lismore and did a survey of the rainforest along the main track around Binna Burra Lodge in the Lamington National Park, southern Queensland. I had a limit of just two days for the Binna Burra survey, two days of non-stop torrential rain. I well remember the leeches crawling onto my shoes as I wrote down the plant names with a biro on drafting film because my paper note pads were soaked.

Jenny and I had already twice visited the lodge, the second time with our first baby boy, Myall, when he was just 12-months old. We learned



abseiling at the lodge while Myall watched on. It was a very sad day when we heard of the destruction of Binna Burra in the horrendous bushfires of September 2019.

In the late 1980s I moved across to the Landscape Conservation Committee and became involved with the listing of landscapes, trees, parks and gardens on the National Trust Register. In more recent years, I have developed a keen personal interest in gardening and gardens. Inspired by our visits to Japan, Jenny and I created Japanese gardens at our home with watercourses, ponds, waterfalls, bamboo fencing, stone lanterns, camellias, azaleas, ginkgo, water lilies, lotus and two Niwaki black pines. The dominant feature at the entrance to one of the gardens is a full-size bright vermillion, green and black *torii* gate.

In terms of National Trust recognition of gardens, I developed proposals to list on the Trust Register the Chinese Garden of Friendship in Darling Harbour (now also listed on the State Heritage Register), the Japanese Gardens in the Auburn Botanical Gardens, the Gosford Edogawa Commemorative Garden and the Cowra Japanese Garden and Cultural Centre. The National Trust had earlier listed the Australian and Japanese War Cemeteries in Cowra.

Looking to the future

I mentioned earlier the horrific bushfires of 2019/2020. National Trust properties in the Blue Mountains were threatened by the bushfires and the Trust's Australian Wildlife Sanctuary at Bargo suffered considerable damage to its trees and buildings. The Trust has made strong public statements on the issue of global warming, the threat it poses to life and property and the dire impacts of prolonged droughts, floods, extreme bush fires and sea level rises on the natural environment, vegetation and our wildlife. Whole ecosystems such as rainforests are facing escalating threats: we have little time left to put in place effective measures to mitigate these impacts.

It was truly an honour and a privilege to work for the National Trust, finally acting as the Trust's Director, Conservation until August 2020 when I retired. The range of conservation work undertaken by the Trust and the diversity of its interests is extraordinary. To achieve this relies strongly on expert voluntary committees, who provide advice and assistance in so many ways, supplemented with input from branch and regional committees on activities and incidents in their areas. The National Trust has been a great training ground, with many heritage professionals in government and private practice having once worked at the National Trust and/or served on one or more its committees.

The National Trust is now celebrating its 75th anniversary, which was delayed because of COVID-19 restrictions. The pandemic has focused attention on the natural and built heritage of New South Wales and Australia. It is all the more important that when we are through these trials and tribulations, we can again visit and appreciate our distinctive Australian heritage. Our landscapes, bushland, rainforest, wetlands, parks, gardens and trees are such important elements in the rich tapestry that makes us who we are.

Happy 75th birthday National Trust!

Graham Quint is the former Director, Conservation with the National Trust of Australia (NSW).

OPPOSITE
Lime Kiln Bay, photo Graham Quint

Left The Australian Army's presence at Holsworthy has great historic significance. During the First World War, German internees were held in a camp known officially as the German Concentration Camp. Photo S C Calderman courtesy Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Right The *gakuzuka* (upper supporting strut) of our *torii* gate with a tablet on which the word 'imagination' is written in gold leaf Japanese calligraphy, photo Graham Quint

Please Help
CARE
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ENVIRONMENTALLY sensitive areas such as this are home to diverse flora and fauna, these areas are important for the preservation of native plants and wildlife in our City.
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PLEASE clean up after your dog and keep it on a lead when not in designated Dog-Off-Leash areas.
OWNERS CAN BE FINED FOR NOT HAVING THEIR DOGS ON A LEAD OR FOR FAILING TO CLEAN-UP AFTER THEM
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2ND SATURDAY OF THE MONTH. 7-9:00 AM.

Elizabeth Teeland

Habitat Brisbane

Bushcare in the suburbs

Being involved in bush care gives people a tangible way of seeing they can achieve positive environmental outcomes, image Walter Teeland

OPPOSITE
Top Isaac Walter Jenner (England/Australia 1836-1902), *Bush Landscape* (1891), oil on composition board 22.7 x 15.6 cm, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art

Bottom The author with her dog Noog and the tallest tree in Brisbane, a *Eucalyptus tereticornis*, photo Walter Teeland

Bushcare groups have become a vital aspect of the rehabilitation and protection of native forests in Australia over the past few decades. This is especially important in areas on the fringe of our expanding urbanisation. I am a member of the Rainbow Forest Experimental Rehabilitation Group Indooroopilly, which was established in 1995. It operates under the umbrella of Habitat Brisbane, the Brisbane City Council's community bushcare volunteer program, which supports over 160 groups. These hands-on conservation efforts protect and enhance habitat and biodiversity in bushland, parks, wetlands and waterways across Greater Brisbane. With an area of 1,343 km^2 to look after, an increase in volunteerism is necessary if our bushcare groups are to have a major impact.

Tree ID No.	Species	Height	Tree Circumference	Diameter Breast Height	Estimate Age Range
Tree No 1	*Eucalyptus tereticornis*	55.5 m	5.2 m	165.5 cm	315–565
Tree No 2	*Eucalyptus tereticornis*	55.3 m	4.65 m	148.0 cm	282–506

Imagine the delight of our bushcare group, when it was discovered in mid-2018 that our little plot not 10 km from the CBD, contains the tallest tree in Brisbane, with a neighbouring tree only slightly smaller. The trees are *Eucalyptus tereticornis* – commonly known as forest red gum, blue gum or red iron gum – and are native to eastern Australia and southern New Guinea, having in fact the widest distribution of any eucalyptus species. Dr Michael Ngugi, Principal Conservation Officer at the Queensland Herbarium in Brisbane, has recently provided these details (see table at the bottom of page 8) of our two trees.

On 24 February 2021 Brisbane's *Courier Mail* reported that a forest red gum on the Somerset property of Noel and Wayne Keller in southeast Queensland has been identified as the biggest tree of its type in the country with a height of 45 m and 8.3 m circumference, reflecting the development of the tree in an open area. Our trees are both 10 m taller but with more modest dimensions around the trunk. The trees' roots have grown into the base of the adjoining Cubberla Creek, which could account for their height.

Eucalyptus tereticornis was first formally described in 1795 by James Edward Smith in *A Specimen of the Botany of New Holland*. Smith used specimens collected in 1793 from Port Jackson by First Fleet surgeon and naturalist John White. The tree has smooth bark, lance-shaped to curved adult leaves, flower buds in groups of seven, nine or 11, white blooms and hemispherical fruit and typically grows to a height of 20 to 50 m.

The suburb of Fig Tree Pocket

Fig Tree Pocket lies just across the creek. It was named after a remarkedly large Moreton Bay fig tree (*Ficus macrophylla*).

The tree was part of the dense rainforest that covered the lower part of the Pocket before white settlers unfortunately cleared the land. As recorded in *A History of Fig Tree Pocket* (Kenmore and District Historical Society Inc.), timber getters moved into the area in the 1860s; then came the farmers attracted by the rich alluvial soil. They grew maize, arrowroot, grapes, sugar cane, potatoes other vegetables, and for a time, cotton. Farmers took their produce to the markets in Brisbane and Ipswich by flat-bottom boats that plied the Brisbane River. Steamers started operating from as early as 1846. There were dairy farmers in the Pocket selling milk and cream; slaughterhouses provided meat locally and to butcher shops in surrounding suburbs. From 1910, Chinese market gardeners set up on the flats along Cubberla Creek.

Person standing at the base of a large fig tree, Fig Tree Pocket, Brisbane, 1866, coutesy State Library of Queensland

Fig Tree Pocket picnic grounds and sandy beaches were very popular places for visitors from the late 1800s. After the paddle steamers, launches brought picnic goers to the area for a day out with games, sporting events and entertainment. Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary, not far from our bushcare site, was founded in 1927 by Claude Reid. He started with a few birds and possums on display, then became an expert koala nurturer, knowledgeable about their habitat and food trees, of which *Eucalyptus tereticornis* is one. The sanctuary became another popular place for tourists who came to nurse the koalas, feed the kangaroos and watch the platypus swimming. Lone Pine is still going strong, now owned by a Japanese company which, fortunately, is committed to preserving it in its present form, even despite the lack of overseas visitors.

Rainbow Forest Experimental Rehabilitation Group

Much of the land around our bushcare site and the surrounding parklands was subdivided from the early 1900s on. The largest area was Jay Park, surveyed in 1924; the smallest was the 2.2-ha estate where we live, subdivided by the Burns family in 1966 following the death of Molly Roe, daughter of the original owner Reginald Heber Roe. He came to Australia from Oriel College, Oxford at the tender age of 26 years to be the second headmaster of Brisbane Grammar School in 1876. He later became the first Vice-Chancellor of the University of Queensland. His son, Arthur Stanley Roe, was Queensland's first Rhodes Scholar. The land (only 200 m from Rainbow Forest) was divided into 10 home sites. All buyers employed architects, a condition of purchase, with the small cul-de-sac of Roedean Street becoming a microcosm of Modernist design.

Our group has been involved in the progressive rehabilitation of the surviving littoral rainforest along this part of the Brisbane River. When the leaves of the Rainbow Forest eucalypts were looking stressed during the millennial drought, an arborist was brought in by Tom McHugh of the Brisbane City Council. On his advice, the encroaching camphor laurels, a native of Southeast Asia introduced by European settlers, were removed from our bushcare site on the north side of Cubberla Creek.

To get an idea of the original state of the site, one only has to look across the creek (prettily fringed with red cannas, purple Mexican petunias and yellow Singapore daisies, all introduced to cultivation in Brisbane in the early 1980s) to see the infestation of camphor laurel on the Rangakarra site now owned by Brisbane Girls Grammar School (BGGS).

Since 2014, Grammar Goes Green – an environmental initiative of BGGS – has been responsible for planting about 500 native trees, shrubs and grasses along the perimeter of the Rangakarra grounds, including the creek and fence line near the road. The school community conducts sessions when it replaces plants that have not survived due to various factors including floods. They have introduced some special areas, including the palm grove, trellises of the bird wing butterfly vine (*Pararistolochia praevenosa*) and the Learning Tree Grove. The school has also installed information boards about the native fauna (most of these written by the girls at BGGS). BGGS often liaises with Cubberla Witton Catchment Network (CWCN), which includes our rehabilitation group, and has been guided through Rainbow Forest several times. BGGS hopes to continue improving its part of Cubberla Creek at future Grammar Goes Green events.

After an extension to the Heritage Brisbane site at Fig Tree Pocket in late 2020, the area of the bushcare site is now 1.86 ha, giving us plenty to do at our monthly working bees. As well as weeding and planting, we collect fallen trees and branches to prevent dams being formed when it floods after heavy rain. Because the area is heavily treed, with Cubberla Creek winding through the park on one side and walking paths on the other, views of the canopies of our two grand eucalypts are occluded and their existence not widely recognised. Fortunately, however, both trees are under consideration for heritage or vegetation protection orders. This will be another tangible sign of the collaboration between volunteers and government authorities, made all the richer by understanding the longevity of the majestic trees we live with.

Elizabeth Teeland is a Brisbane-based volunteer at two bushcare sites located at Indooroopilly and Fig Tree Pocket, and the kitchen garden at the Mount Cootha Botanic Gardens. She is a foundation guide at QAGOMA (Queensland Art Gallery/ Gallery of Modern Art).

Top The surviving trunks of camphor laurels have effectively degraded in Brisbane's subtropical climate, photo Walter Teeland

Bottom Fig tree at the Fig Tree Pocket Equestrian Centre, photo Walter Teeland

Tim Gatehouse

Goronga
A hill station garden in the Dandenongs

Algerian oak (*Quercus canariensis*) lines the driveway to *Goronga*'s house, photo Tim Gatehouse

Goronga is a grazing property in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges, 55 kilometres from Melbourne. Its hill station garden is remarkable for the huge oaks planted mostly between the 1880s and 1920s, their extraordinary size influenced by the volcanic soil and temperate climate of the area. Situated on a hilltop with views extending to Western Port Bay, *Goronga* is surrounded by native forest interspersed with open pasture. It is still owned by the descendants of William Thorp Raleigh and his wife Matilda, who established it.

Goronga is a property within the tradition of the hill station, a 19th-century colonial phenomenon created by Europeans in their tropical and subtropical possessions. In Australia, their inspiration were the hill stations of India, albeit with variations reflecting climatic and cultural conditions of each, and their different histories.

The very concept of living in mountain regions underwent a profound change in the early 19th century. Until then Europeans regarded mountains as unattractive and dangerous, but as the Romantic movement gathered momentum they came to be seen as places of picturesque beauty and destinations for health and recreation, receiving the ultimate sanction when Queen Victoria bought Balmoral Castle in the Scottish Highlands in 1852.

Positive European perceptions of mountains infiltrated India at an earlier date than Australia. For British residents in India, the extreme heat of the plains in summer made a retreat to the cooler climate of the hills essential for health and comfort. Here they recuperated from the heat and

indulged in nostalgia for home, living in English-style houses set in gardens of English plants.

The concept of the hill station was part of the cultural influence British India had on Australia from the earliest days of settlement. Many colonial officials had served in India before being appointed to Australian positions. Governor Macquarie in New South Wales and Sir Henry Loch, Governor of Victoria from 1884 to 1889, were among those who had previously served in India. The purchase of Government Cottage at Mount Macedon in 1885 for Sir Henry Loch may have been inspired by his wife's sister, married to Lord Lytton, Viceroy of India, whose country retreat at Simla in the Himalayan foothills was the grandest hill station of all.

There was also much reciprocal visiting between Anglo-Indians and Australians. George Raleigh, the second son of William and Matilda, served in the British army in India where Matilda and her daughters Adeline and Hilda visited him in 1913. Trade also connected the countries. Tallow, which had been manufactured by the Raleighs since the 1840s, was an important export to India.

These connections made hill stations familiar to Australians. Although the climate was not as severe as in India, Australian summers were sufficiently hot for those with means to establish second homes in hilly locations close to capital cities. From the 1870s small communities grew up at places like Mount Macedon and the Dandenongs in Victoria, the Adelaide Hills in South Australia, the Blue Mountains in New South Wales and Toowoomba in Queensland. These clusters of houses in large gardens, sometimes with hotels and guest houses nearby, became Australia's hill stations.

The architecture of Australian hill stations also reflected those in India, as is shown by the faux half-timbered *Derriweit Heights* at Mount Macedon and the Gothic Revival house, *The Towers*, at Upper Beaconsfield. Although *Goronga*'s verandahs and French windows owe more of their design to the bungalows of the Indian plains that became features of Australian colonial homesteads, the steep gabled roof and dormer windows give it the appearance of a vernacular English house.

The Raleighs

The Pakenham Upper area in the Dandenong Ranges was opened for selection in the 1870s. The land that later became *Goronga*, had two previous owners, farmers named Thomas and Doherty. In 1889 it was purchased by William Thorp Raleigh (1835–1915). William, his parents Joseph and Priscilla, older brother John and younger brother Joseph had arrived in Melbourne in 1843. Joseph Raleigh had been a cotton mill owner in Manchester but after suffering financial losses used his remaining capital to emigrate.

The family arrived in Melbourne during a serious depression. Although wool prices had collapsed there was still a market in England for tallow used in the manufacture of soap and candles. The Henty brothers at Portland had experimented with boiling down sheep for this purpose and Joseph adopted their method, establishing a factory at the junction of the Yarra and Maribyrnong rivers where he later established a meat works. He also operated a wharf on the Yarra River and a punt crossing the Maribyrnong. His employees were housed in a towered building known as Malakoff Castle high above the river,

Top Simla–the Mall, postcard, photograph by R. Hotz c. 1900, source **www.lib.lsu.edu**

Bottom Adeline and Hilda with puppies Pat and Larry, 1907, photo courtesy Elizabeth Fraser

Top Dandenong State Forest at Fern Tree Gully, 1877, photographer N J Claire, courtesy State Library of Victoria

Middle William Thorp Raleigh (left), the creator of the garden at *Goronga*, photo courtesy Elizabeth Fraser

Bottom The house at *Goronga* today, photo Tim Gatehouse

a landmark in the west of Melbourne until the 1920s. Joseph lived at Moonee Ponds. With the profits from his various enterprises, he purchased several sheep stations and by the time he died in 1852 the family businesses were prospering.

Of Joseph Raleigh's children, John (1834–1914), William's elder brother became a merchant and shipping agent in England, in later life retiring to Sandringham in Victoria. William Thorp Raleigh and his younger brother Joseph Raleigh junior (1840–1902) established a stock and station agency with George Aitken and Henry Dauglish, which expanded to become the Agency, Land and Finance Company of Australia Limited. William was also a partner in Bulgaroo Station in Queensland.

William Thorp Raleigh married Matilda Hebden, the daughter of George Hebden, a Riverina grazier. In the last years of his life he lived at *Athelstane* in Toorak, which had one of the finest gardens in Melbourne. A later owner transformed it into *Mandeville Hall.* During the 1880s William and Matilda Raleigh and their five children Hubert, George, Maud, Adeline and Hilda lived in St Kilda Street, Brighton. In 1889 the Raleighs purchased the 200-acre (81-ha) farm they named *Goronga*, meaning 'big camping ground' in the local Aboriginal language.

The Raleighs were among others from similar backgrounds, who purchased properties in the lower ranges of the Dandenongs. *Calembeen* at Upper Beaconsfield, a house of similar design to *Goronga*, was owned by William Watt, Premier of Victoria from 1911 to 1912, *The Towers* at Upper Beaconsfield by John Kitchen, a soap manufacturer; *The Grange* at Pakenham Upper by John McMahon, a tailor, property speculator and Mayor of Fitzroy; and *Holm Park* at Beaconsfield by the Armytage family of graziers.

A small single storey building, the original farmhouse was retained and converted into the service wing of the new house, which was built adjoining it. Matilda is reputed to have had architectural training and is credited with the design of the new house.

Goronga was used as a country retreat by William and Matilda until William's death in 1915. It was then purchased by their daughter Adeline and her husband Frederick Mann (1869–1958). A barrister, Mann was appointed to the Supreme Court of Victoria in 1919, knighted in 1933, appointed Chief Justice in 1935 and Lieutenant Governor in 1936. In later life Sir Frederick became a trustee of Maud Gibson Trust at the Melbourne Botanic Gardens. He and Adeline

were both enthusiastic gardeners and planted many of the trees that are still major components of the garden.

After the Second World War one of Sir Frederick and Lady Mann's five children, William Raleigh Mann, took over *Goronga*, developing it as an orchard and grazing property for sheep and cattle. He and his wife Barbara both died in 2002, and *Goronga* is now owned by one of their children, Elizabeth, and her husband Ian Fraser.

The garden

The two driveways, both approximately 200 m in length, converge on the house and are lined with Algerian oaks. Other specimen trees planted throughout the garden include a southern magnolia, camphor laurel, varieties of oak, a beech, several coast redwoods (also known as Californian redwood) and a Mexican cypress.

The development of the garden at *Goronga* has been influenced by a network of the Raleigh's relatives and associates, all enthusiastic participants in horticulture and experiments in the propagation of Australian and introduced species. William and Matilda Raleigh's elder son Hubert married Denise Ryan, daughter of fellow stock and station agent whose father, Charles Ryan, owned the garden *Derriweit Heights* at Mount Macedon. Ryan's wife Marian, was the daughter of squatter John Cotton, who was an ornithologist, painter and author. One of Henry Ryan's sisters was the flower painter Ellis Rowan and another of John Cotton's daughters, Caroline, was married to Albert Le Soeuf, first director of the Melbourne Zoo. Le Soeuf was also the secretary of the Acclimatisation Society of which Charles Ryan was treasurer. The society's 640-acre (259-ha) experimental plot was close to *Goronga* at Gembrook, and although it was used mainly for experiments with the introduction of wildlife, its members, at least two of whom were the Raleighs' relatives, must have visited *Goronga* when the garden was being planted. Denise Ryan's sister Eleanor married Patrick Henry Lang, the owner of *Titanga Station* in the Western District where a magnificent garden and experimental arboretum were cultivated.

Goronga was established as an Australian interpretation of the Indian hill station tradition whose owners were part of the closely linked Victorian horticultural world. Its preservation is due to continuous ownership by a family of dedicated gardeners who maintain it in the spirit in which it was conceived.

Acknowledgement

I wish to thank Elizabeth and Ian Fraser for giving me access to *Goronga* and to their family records.

Tim Gatehouse is a retired lawyer interested in the pre-goldrush history of Victoria, architectural history and the history of gardening. He is the author of *Titanga, a homestead in the landscape*, which is available to AGHS members for the discounted price of $15 and to non-members for $25. Members can download a digital copy at https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/product/garden-history-titanga/

Left In March 2021, John Hawker (retired tree expert with Heritage Victoria), prepared a plant list, where he mentions the age of comparison trees for the exceptionally large Algerian oak in the north driveway. These include the Guilfoyle oak at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, planted in August 1873, and a federal oak, planted in March 1890 in the Parliament Gardens, Melbourne.

See the AGHS website for more details.

Right The Mexican cypress was planted by Sir Frederick Mann in 1937 as part of a nationwide program of tree planting to commemorate the coronation of George VI.

photos Tim Gatehouse

Malcolm Traill

Bringing botany to the suburbs

Street signs in Albany

Image courtesy Western Australian Museum

How better to acknowledge the work of botanists than by naming streets after them? That's what has happened in a post-war suburb of Albany on the south coast of Western Australia, the first European settlement on that side of the continent. In late 1826, two and half years before the foundation of Perth, a garrison and convict establishment was established as Frederick Town, in honour of Prince Frederick, Duke of York and Albany.

The suburb of Lockyer, named for the first commandant of the garrison, Major Edmund Lockyer, was built after the Second World War to house newly arrived European migrants. Within Lockyer, there are several street names that acknowledge the contribution of botanists from all over the world. Some of these people never came near Albany, but plants named after them grow in our gardens and national parks. None more so in Australia than Banks Street, named after a great British scientist and patron of the arts, Sir Joseph Banks.

Banks, Lambert and Leschenault

As a young man on James Cook's voyage on the H M Bark *Endeavour* from 1768 to 1771, Banks was one of the first British people to set foot in Australia. With the advantages of wealth and patronage – his father was a member of the House of Commons – he had enrolled as a gentleman-commoner to study natural history at Oxford University. Dismayed that he could not study botany there, he engaged his own private tutor, Israel Lyons, from Cambridge University.

Left Baron Ferdinand von Mueller, c. 1890, Charles Troedel (printer) after Robert Wendel, courtesy National Portrait Gallery, Canberra

Right *Banksia ericifolia* by Margaret Pieroni, image courtesy of the Royal Botanic Gardens & Domain Trust

Via contacts at the Royal Society, Banks managed to accompany Cook, where he excelled in plant collection and, with Sydney Parkinson, botanical illustration. He made the first scientific description of the *Bougainvillea* in Brazil and is best known in Australia for the genus *Banksia*, which contains more than 170 varieties, most of which occur in WA. Banks's most notable contribution as both patron and collector is to botany, although his influence as President of the Royal Society for 41 years, his access to King George III and his observations on multiple topics (including suggesting the British government use New South Wales as a convict settlement) contribute to his legacy.

Lesser known is Aylmer Lambert, whose street, Lambert Street, adjoins Banks Street. He was a Fellow of the Linnean Society, the world's oldest biological society and, despite never leaving England, he amassed significant botanical collections, including that of Archibald Menzies, George Vancouver's botanist. Menzies is also remembered in Lockyer (see below).

Lambert's work was chiefly on conifers (the *Pinus* genus), although he is remembered botanically by the genus *Lambertia*, a flowering plant from the Proteaceae family. Lambert and Banks were assiduous in collecting plants for the newly established Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew, London.

Lambert Street leads into Leschenault Street. Jean-Baptiste Leschenault de La Tour was a French aristocrat, who was on Nicolas Baudin's expedition to New Holland (1801–1803). His position was as chief botanist, although he instilled no great confidence. Baudin commented that the gardener's boy, Guichenot, collected more plants than Leschenault and labelled them more carefully! Nevertheless, his legacy survives, in plants and birds – he was a skilled ornithologist. In WA, the genus *Lechenaultia* (note the different spelling) is a popular native flowering plant. Leschenault continued to travel the world and died in France in 1826, coincidentally the year of Albany's foundation.

Drummond and von Mueller

Two of botany's most durable names come next in the Lockyer streetscape. James Drummond was WA's first great botanical collector, while the younger Baron Ferdinand von Mueller had a profound influence over Australian botany in the later 19th century.

Drummond arrived in the Swan River Colony in 1829, expecting he would be paid for his work as the Government Naturalist. The job being however only an honorary position, he acquired a farming property near Toodyay, north of Perth,

See *AGH*, vol.33, no.1, July 2021, *Botanic Endeavour*. The Florilegium Society's exhibition of paintings inspired by specimens collected on that voyage was twice postponed due to COVID-19. It is now scheduled to be held at Lion Gate Lodge in the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney from 7 to 22 May 2022, just a few days after the 252nd anniversary of the collecting at Kamay Botany Bay by Banks and Solander.

which he named *Hawthornden* and where he lived for the rest of his 76 years. Drummond was indefatigable in his travels and seed collection. He covered thousands of miles on horseback and came to Albany with his son Johnston. Together they solved the mystery of worrying stock losses in the district. Using controlled experiments on a farm at Kojonup, north of Albany, they identified the *Gastrolobium* plants as poisonous to introduced species but harmless to native fauna. Biographer Rica Erickson described him:

> Old James Drummond, with his two white packhorses and kangaroo dogs, was a familiar figure throughout the colony. Described as a plain but agreeable old man, his dour Scottish face was framed by bushy white whiskers.
>
> He usually walked everywhere, his horses being laden with stores on the way out and specimens on the way home. When his knapsacks and pockets were filled with plants, his white head was bared and his hat was crammed to the brim.

His collections were sent to widespread herbaria and collectors. But Drummond's family life was mired by tragedy. His son Johnston was killed by Aboriginals and another son, John, a policeman, shot the murderer in revenge. John was suspended from the force but later reappointed at a lower rank.

Von Mueller was less active as a collector but no less influential. He came to Adelaide from Germany in 1847, probably on the recommendation of the plant collector Preiss. Trained as a pharmacist but with a lifelong love of botany, von Mueller soon relocated to Melbourne to become Government Botanist, where he demonstrated his talent as an administrator. Von Mueller was appointed Director of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens in 1857 where he supervised the construction of the herbarium, still one of the world's great collections. Today, he would be labelled a chronic workaholic. His annual outgoing correspondence topped 3,000 letters and he authored more than 800 scientific papers on Australian botany. This effort notwithstanding, he was dismissed from the Botanic Gardens because their progress was too slow for his critics. Wounded, he was reputed never to have entered them again.

But his work continued. Von Mueller pioneered the Australian eucalyptus oil industry and completed a survey of forests for the WA Government (1879). He promoted settlement and exploitation of Papua New Guinea and Antarctica by Australian colonies. He died in Melbourne in 1896, aged 71, having become a household name in Australasia.

Preiss and Menzies

Lesser known but from the same German heritage, (Johann) Ludwig Preiss arrived in the Swan River Colony in 1838. He immediately took up his passion for plant collection and came into contact with Johnston Drummond and another collector, John Gilbert, who was working for zoologist and illustrator John Gould. Preiss challenged the Drummonds' theory of poison plants, even swallowing an infused brew of *Gastrolobium* (now known as 1080 poison). Preiss survived but lost the argument after the Drummonds proved the plants' toxicity for introduced stock.

Preiss's collection methods and willingness to pay high prices for specimens were unpopular and he was subjected to xenophobic prejudice. Having amassed an amazing collection of more than 200,000 plant, bird and animal specimens, he returned to Europe in 1842. Many of his collections were dispersed and the provenance of much of his work has been lost or credited to others. Yet, his name lives on in botanical circles — his achievements created a permanent connection between the botanical sciences in Western Australia and Germany.

The final botanical link in the Lockyer area is Menzies Street, named after the Scottish botanist on Captain George Vancouver's 1791–1795 voyage, Archibald Menzies. Menzies was born in Perthshire and trained as a doctor at Edinburgh University. His knowledge of botany was impressive. On his first expedition to North America, Hawaii and China, he was employed as surgeon and botanist. He successfully botanised and none of the crew died – a dual triumph!

The Vancouver expedition on HMS *Discovery* made the first recorded European landing at King George's Sound (Albany) in September 1791. Vancouver noted in his journal:

> I felt myself unqualified to determine, as to enumerate scientifically the several trees, shrubs, and plants with which this country abounds. Of the two latter there appeared to be a great variety, and I believe afforded to Mr. Menzies much entertainment and employment. Amongst the most remarkable was the gum plant, found everywhere in great abundance…

Menzies continued on the epic Vancouver voyage. The first European to record the monkey puzzle tree in Chile, he transported its seeds back to England. The tree became a favourite in many formal gardens across Europe. Menzies succeeded Lambert as the 'father' of the Linnean Society and lived out the rest of his life in London as a family doctor.

The quest for new and exotic plants became a holy grail for European adventurers of the 18th and 19th centuries. They certainly went to great lengths to outdo each other in their travels and collecting. The street names of the Albany suburb of Lockyer are a significant tribute to their achievements and the developers of Lockyer can take great credit, especially amongst plant lovers, for their nomenclature.

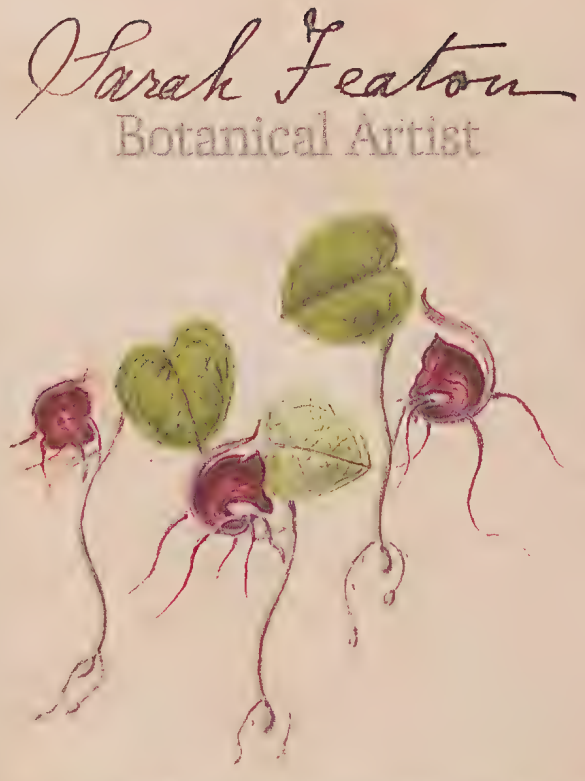
Malcolm Traill is an Albany-based historian and university tutor who has worked for many years as a librarian, researcher and museum professional. In 2020, he won the Individual Professional Contribution prize in the WA Heritage Awards.

Images courtesy Western Australian Museum

OPPOSITE

Top *Lechenaultia biloba* (blue leschenaultia), image courtesy of Southern Flora Nursery, Bridgetown, WA

Bottom James Drummond with one of his grandchildren, image courtesy State Library of Western Australia



Corysanthes macrantha

New Zealand Post Official First Day Cover

Lynette Townsend

Botanical brushstrokes

The Sarah Featon stamps

New Zealand Post, Collectables, First Day Cover, design by Hannah Fortune, 2021. The spider orchids illustrated on the right are *Corybas macranthus* (syn. *Corysanthes macrantha*).

Image courtesy New Zealand Post

Sarah Ann Featon (1848–1927) was an English-born botanical artist. She created a series of watercolour artworks that showcased and celebrated the beauty and variety of Aotearoa–New Zealand's flora, particularly the colourful range of flowers here. Following in the footsteps of Georgina Hetley, who published *The native flowers of New Zealand* (1887–1888) in England, Sarah Featon and her surveyor husband Edward 'wished to prove "fallacious and incorrect" the assertion that there were no flowers in New Zealand' (quoted in Field-Dodgson, 2003, p. 62). The Featon's publication, *The art album of New Zealand flora* (1889), was the first of its kind to be printed and published within New Zealand.

Using colour chromolithographic plates, Sarah and Edward Featon created a large, deluxe publication comprising of 40 plates of New Zealand's native flora. Chromolithography was a new but extremely expensive process. Although the technique was cutting-edge and the resulting publication highly desirable, the project bankrupted the Wellington publishing firm Bock & Cousins Ltd soon after publication. It also personally cost the Featons £1,400, a huge amount at the time, for one thousand copies. The book was intended to be the first of a set of three, but sadly the other two were never published.

The art album of New Zealand flora comprised Sarah Featon's vibrant watercolours, accompanied by Edward Featon's detailed botanical descriptions. One reviewer proclaimed it as 'one of [the] most artistic and perfect pieces of chromo-lithgraphic work that have ever been executed in New Zealand'. Even so, on close examination some of the detail in the original paintings was lost in the print process: Featon's original watercolours are truer to the actual colour of the plants she illustrated.

Fortunately, 134 of the original watercolours were purchased for £150 by the Dominion Museum in 1919, when Featon was widowed and desperately short of funds. Today they are part of the collection at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. This represents a surge of interest in Sarah Featon, although she and her artwork remain relatively unknown. Te Papa held a small exhibition in 2019, and the Tairāwhiti Museum in Gisborne, Sarah Featon's adopted home town, is planning an exhibition in 2022. Research and a publication on Sarah Featon's life and art is also underway.

The stamps

Featon's colourful, expertly illustrated botanical artworks were well placed to form the basis of a New Zealand Post stamp issue. Designer Hannah Fortune and I took the opportunity to visit Te Papa and view the original artworks, each of which show clear detail and vibrant colour. In addition, we discovered that each painting has a handwritten label of the plant's botanical name, common name and/or Māori name, and each is personally signed by the artist. These intimate touches add a personal layer to the artworks that tangibly link each one back to Featon herself. It was these additional elements that our designer felt compelled to include on the stamps, released on 5 May 2021.

The design also includes samples of handwriting taken from Featon's letters held in Te Papa's archive. Very little was done to alter the original artwork, apart from the removal of a few of the dark foxing marks (spots or blotches). The images selected were chosen in collaboration with Te Papa curators who picked their favourites based on research interests, aesthetic appeal, and a desire to present an interesting and varied mix of New Zealand plant specimens. We also took into account practicalities such as the size of stamps and which illustration would or wouldn't work well on these tiny canvases. Wherever possible, we aimed to accurately represent the original watercolours.

The collectable stamp program at New Zealand Post is influenced by a broad range of factors — commemorative events, a desire to create stamp sets that appeal to our loyal collectors, and an aspiration to produce a well-curated, diverse range of stamps that reflect our history, culture, our past, present and future. By focusing on the work of Sarah Featon, we have not only created a stunningly beautiful set of stamps but also highlighted the work of a talented and relatively unknown artist — one of our unsung national treasures.

Acianthus sinclairii

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Field-Dodgson, C (2003), 'In full bloom: Botanical art and flower painting by women in 1880s New Zealand' Master's Thesis, Victoria University of Wellington. Available at **https://researcharchive.vuw.ac.nz/xmlui/handle/10063/4681**

Rice, R (2019), *Overview* [Sarah Featon collections], March 2019, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa: Collections Online: **https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz**

Individual stamps illustrate the following watercolours of New Zealand indigenous plants by Sarah Featon:

top left, *Clematis paniculata*, puawānanga; top right, *Corynocarpus laevigatus*, karaka; bottom left, *Clianthus puniceus*, *kōwhai ngutu-kākā*; bottom right, *Pleurophyllum speciosum*, Antarctic daisy.

Image courtesy New Zealand Post

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John Dwyer

Sweet pittosporum, native laurel or native daphne

(*Pittosporum undulatum* Vent.)

The flowers of *Pittosporum undulatum*, photo Francesca Beddie

Pittosporum undulatum grows as shrub or tree from 4 to 15 m high. The smooth dark green leaves, with the distinctive wavy or undulating margins referenced in the botanical name, are generally arranged in whorls or semi-whorls. The creamy white bell-shaped fragrant flowers with five petals are in clusters of four or five at the end of the stems. The fruits are hard berries turning from green to yellow then orange when ripe, splitting to expose 20 to 30 sticky orange-red seeds.

For 100 years or more, sweet pittosporum was a common and much-appreciated garden plant, being fast growing, doing well in coastal gardens and having sweetly perfumed creamy white flowers in spring, followed by small bright orange fruits that attract a variety of birds to the garden. In human-modified landscapes it may make a good contribution but from the 1980s it began to be included in the new category of environmental weed.

As E E Pescott (1872–1954), the Principal of Burnley School of Horticulture from 1909 to 1916, wrote in *The Native Flowers of Victoria* (1914):

> The *Pittosporum* genus is known to all gardeners; and *Pittosporum undulatum*, the broad-leaved variety, has been grown as a hedge plant for many years. The generic name means pitch-seed, and it is suitable owing to the glutinous sticky nature of the substance surrounding the seed. This shrub makes an excellent hedge and will stand pruning to any extent. It also grows to a fine shrub or tree and its creamy flower clusters emit a very sweet and strong fragrance.

Early nursery catalogues confirm that pittosporum was on sale in Victoria from Rule's Victoria Nursery at Richmond in 1855, and Adcock's

Pittosporum fruit, photo Francesca Beddie

Kardinia Nursery at Highton, Geelong in 1857. Edward La Trobe Bateman (1816–97) who, as Anne Neale wrote, 'appears to have relished the opportunity to make extensive use of trees native to Australia' recommended pittosporums in gardens he designed in Victoria between 1855 and 1869, including at the University of Melbourne and *Heronswood* on the Mornington Peninsula.

Harold Sargeant (1882–1973), whose gardening column in the *Melbourne Herald* over four decades under the pen-name 'Anthos' made him a household name to Victorian gardeners, recommended pittosporums as dense, hardy evergreens with a 'delightful fragrance...after rain' in *Garden Trees and Shrubs in Australia* (1951).

Environmental weeds

The earliest publication referring to environmental weeds was a paper by Amor and Stevens published in *Weed Research* 16 (1976). G W Carr gave an extended definition of environmental weeds in volume one of *The Flora of Victoria* (1993):

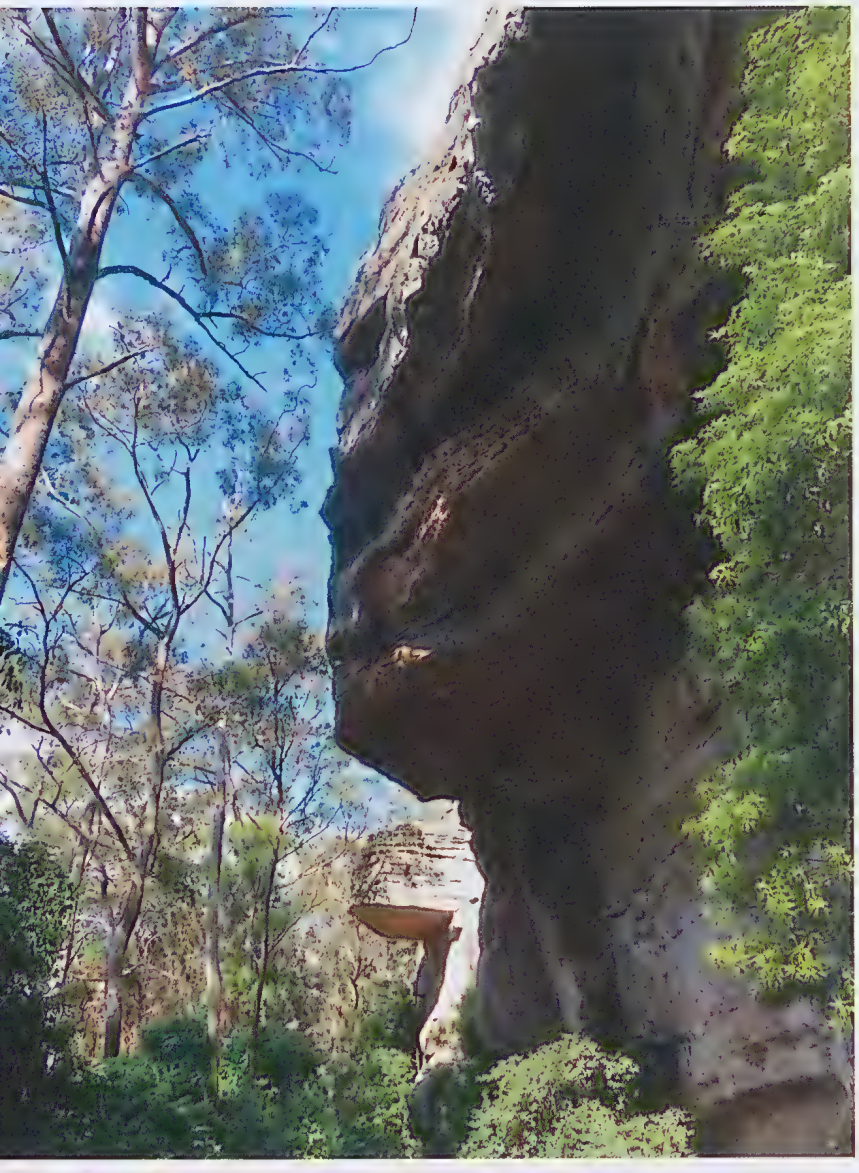
> Naturalized, exotic or ecologically 'out-of-balance' indigenous species outside the agricultural or garden context which, as a result of invasion, adversely affect survival or regeneration of indigenous species in natural or partly-natural vegetation communities.

The expression 'out-of-balance' has echoes of age-old ideas of the balance of nature, which for a time persisted in ecological theory. These have been discredited. The view that plant communities are not stable but in a constant state of flux is now widely accepted: the distribution of plant species is characterised by change with or without human interventions.

Early English explorers such as Sir Thomas Mitchell (1792–1855), writing from the false perspective that humans are not part of nature, described parts of Australia as being in a state of nature. In fact, what the English found when they invaded Australia were landscapes that were not wilderness but made by Aboriginal people, as demonstrated by Bill Gammage in *The Biggest Estate on Earth* (2012) and Bruce Pascoe in *Dark Emu* (2014). In a somewhat polemical book, *Farmers or Hunter-Gatherers? The Dark Emu Debate* (2021), Peter Sutton and Keryn Walshe attacked many of Pascoe's ideas, in particular his claim that Aboriginal people engaged in agriculture. I agree with Gammage's cautious response that some Aboriginal people farmed but none depended on it. What remains clear is that the landscapes are, in terms of the natural/cultural division, *cultural* landscapes: the oldest cultural landscapes in the world. There is no basis on which to privilege the distribution of plants as it was at the time of English colonisation.

Sweet pittosporum

Dr Trudi Mullett has worked and published on sweet pittosporum since the 1980s. In a paper published in *Plant Protection* (2001) she characterised the species as 'arguably the most



Top *Pittosporum undulatum* in the bush, near Milton NSW, photo Stuart Read. Sweet pittosporum is found in moist gullies in rainforest and sclerophyll forest from southeast Queensland to eastern Victoria and has naturalised in parts of Tasmania and South Australia

Bottom The bright green foliage of pittosporums stand out at Mt Eliza, Victoria, photo John Dwyer

serious native environmental weed in southeast Australia'. She wrote:

> This adaptable species has exploited changes in natural disturbance regimes and increased dispersal opportunities so spread from abundant ornamental plantings into remnant vegetation.

But she also acknowledged that pittosporum:

> plays an important role in the community ecology of its indigenous habitats. The species' dual native and weedy status often complicates management… especially in its natural range where many populations are expanding.

Mullett wrote the chapter on *Pittosporum undulatum* in *The Biology of Australian Weeds*, Volume 3 (2009). She discusses colonisation by pittosporum of previously unexploited habitats in Victoria outside its 'natural range', including in the Mornington Peninsula and the Dandenong Ranges. Nearly 150 years earlier, Bentham's *Flora Australiensis* (1863) noted pittosporum in Victoria as extending to 'rocky places about Western Port'. Having regard to the proximity of the Mornington Peninsula and the Dandenong Ranges to Western Port, and the demonstrated capacity of *P. undulatum* to spread, there is a real possibility that it would have reached these places by now even without human intervention. Should it, then, be regarded as within its 'natural range'? Transfers of the species further into Victoria and South Australia make clear that human interventions have been involved and that it is no longer possible to confine the species to its supposed 'natural range'.

Preserve, protect or remove?

These are not idle questions. As Mullett's 2009 paper demonstrates, under the *National Parks Act 1975*, managers of areas reserved (such as the Dandenong Ranges National Park) must 'preserve and protect indigenous flora' and 'eradicate and control exotic flora'. Mullett raises the issue of a plant like *P. undulatum*, which 'may fall into both categories, especially in reserves within the species' natural range where many indigenous populations are becoming invasive'. Here, Mullett seems to have in mind the other category of native environmental weed referred to by Carr: indigenous species within their 'natural range', which have become, as he wrote, ecologically 'out of balance'.

The ecologist Winty Calder, who spent much of her life on the Mornington Peninsula and had a deep concern for the conservation of the natural

environment, wrote in *Peninsula Perspectives* (1986) of sweet pittosporum:

> On the Mornington Peninsula mature trees are found in remnants of natural vegetation close to residential areas. This species is not indigenous to the peninsula but is slowly spreading out from some residential areas and establishing within natural woodland or forest. There appears to be no need to remove this plant from gardens, but care should be taken to prevent it disrupting the remnants of native vegetation.

There have been unfortunate consequences from describing pittosporum as a weed. As the definition in *Hortus Second* (1946) put it, a weed is 'a plant not wanted and therefore to be destroyed'. There has been a recent tendency to remove *P. undulatum* from human modified landscapes because it has been classified as an environmental weed. Jocelyn Howell argued in her paper in *Cunninghamia* (2003), '*Pittosporum undulatum* as a case study for native species that change range – how to avoid inappropriate responses?', that labelling the species an 'environmental weed' had caused the loss of all the associated biodiversity in the Sydney region:

> Results have included invasion of bared areas by exotic weeds such as *Lantana camera, Ehrharta erecta* and *Tradescantia flumminensis* which cannot be considered an improvement to the habitat.

Do no harm

Unintended consequences of this kind too often follow the removal of plants said to be weeds. Appropriate management of pittosporum in bushland can be a complex matter requiring careful thought and action. The principle of bioethics in medicine often attributed to Hippocrates, *primum non nocere* or 'do no harm', should be front of mind when dealing with occurrences of pittosporum. It may be better to leave the bush alone to look after itself.

Diana Snape's *The Australian Garden: Designing with Australian Plants* (2002) advised readers to:

> Avoid planting anything likely to become an environmental weed, as *Acacia baileyana* (Cootamundra wattle), *A. saligna* (golden wreath wattle) and *Pittosporum undulatum* (sweet pittosporum) have become in many areas of southern Australia.

George Seddon, in the prologue to that book, was so concerned about *Pittosporum undulatum*, 'now regarded as a serious invasive weed in the Dandenongs, where it is not indigenous' that he referred to it twice in 11 pages. In places like suburban Melbourne such advice seems to me to be overdone. Others think there may still be a place for pittosporum in our gardens. Weed expert Kate Blood's notes on the species read:

The mature pittosporum growing next to the heritage building at Epworth Rehab in Richmond, Melbourne is not a weed, photo John Dwyer

> Generally fallen out of favour in nurseries but resurgence of interest sparked by nostalgia. Commonly available at markets and treated as a heritage plant by some garden enthusiasts being swapped or given as presents.

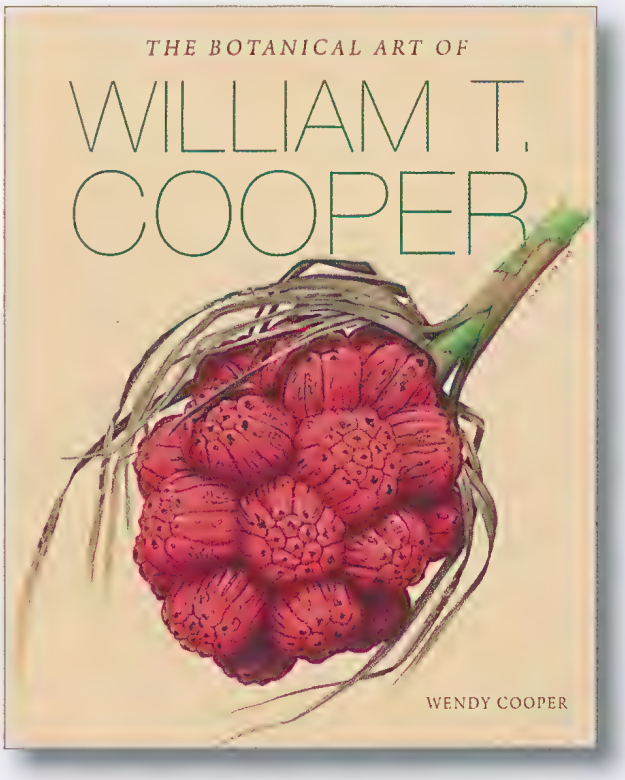
One person's nostalgia may be another's heritage conservation, and the history of pittosporum makes it still an appropriate component in the gardens of heritage properties.

Dr John Dwyer is a retired QC and a former chair of AGHS. His publications include his book *Weeds, plants and people* and many articles in *Australian Garden History* about weeds and landscape.

For the bookshelf

Wendy Cooper, *The Botanical Art of William T. Cooper*

National Library of Australia Publishing, 2020, $65



William T (Bill) Cooper, AO (1934–2015) is considered to be Australia's pre-eminent natural history artist. He is best remembered for his paintings of birds published in books such as *Parrots of the World* (1973), *Birds of Paradise and Bowerbirds* (1977), *Australian Parrots* (1981), *The Cockatoos* (2001) and *Turacos* (2002), and tropical plants published in *Fruits of the Rainforest* (1994) and *Fruits of the Australian Tropical Rainforest* (2004) (text by Wendy Cooper), amongst others. Many institutions throughout the world hold examples of his art, with major holdings in the State Library of New South Wales and the National Library of Australia. This work provides an intimate look at his productivity, day-to-day working techniques, and his thoughts on drawing and his subjects.

Opening this book is like entering a trove of secret botanical delights. It is a sumptuous presentation of botanical 'discoveries' as Bill Cooper explores and records, through illustration and painting, many facets of the natural world in his tropical highland locality and beyond. It is also an identification guide, a botanical textbook and an art book, all presented with care, insight and love by his wife and botanical collaborator, Wendy Cooper.

The page dimension of this book, at 24 x 29 cm, allows for full appreciation of the art works, which in a smaller book would lose their impact. The book includes five chapters: Trees and shrubs; Vines, ferns and epiphytes; Dry country; Swamps, mangroves and beach forest; and Beyond Australia. There is a relevant glossary and a thorough index covering both common and scientific names. Possibly my only criticism of this book is that it lacks the synonyms of the plant species, although this is only a technical matter of interest to taxonomists.

Four of the five chapters are introduced by naturalist Rupert Russell, who provides clear context for the illustrations and plant descriptions. Each chapter layout presents a series of species descriptions by Wendy Cooper – she is an accomplished and well-published taxonomic botanist – each accompanied by illustrations, sketches or paintings, all by Bill Cooper, related to the species. The minimal species descriptions include family and common names, information on distribution and unusual or unique characters, as well as references to Bill's sketches and paintings, and extracts from his diaries. The illustrations include many unpublished sketches and preliminary works as well as previously published paintings.

The book's most significant impact is to reveal the sheer detailedness of Bill's work. He paid attention to the finest nuances in texture, shape and colour, thus bringing alive every leaf, flower, fruit and the associated birds, insects, animals and landscapes.

This is a generous book because of the copious illustrations, simple but pertinent text and the pleasing layout. It is a very fitting addition to the legacy of Bill Cooper as seen through the eyes of his wife and botanical collaborator and is highly recommended for anyone interested in tropical botany, Australian birds and botanical art.

Dr John Leslie Dowe is an Adjunct Senior Research Fellow at the Australian Tropical Herbarium, James Cook University, Cairns.

Andrea Minoglio and Laura Fanelli, *Our World Out of Balance, Understanding Climate Change and What We Can Do*

Blue Dot Kids, 2021, aimed at children aged 8–12

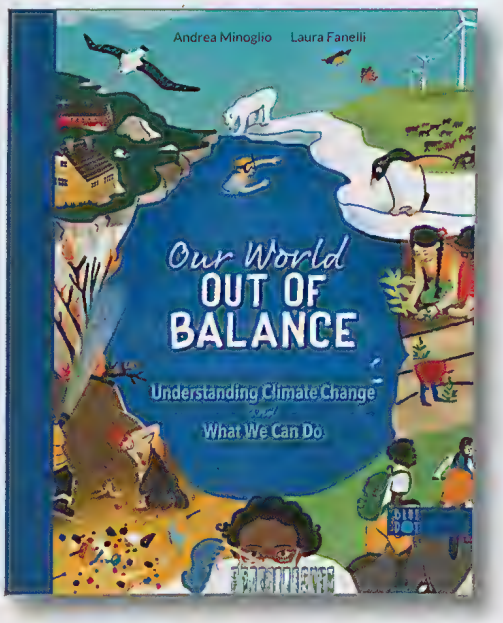
Our World Out of Balance is a fantastic resource for helping younger children understand a topic as complex and multifaceted as climate change – without being overly anxiety-inducing. That said, it may be a little too thought-provoking for bedtime or unsupervised reading.

This book will raise a lot of questions in little ones and has the potential for being used for whole-family discussions. You could also use the information graphics to create games, creative tasks and even experiments at home. Some of the topics lend themselves well to guided outdoor excursions (a welcome distraction in current times in Australia) in the form of identifying, observing, drawing and/or discussing different elements of the environment with your children or grandchildren.

The authors explain major causes and effects of global warming. Each double-page spread covers a different topic, from the concept of climate change through to individual issues such as overpopulation, deforestation and sea-level changes. Each section includes a brief description of the problem, an explanation of what humans are doing to combat it, and some ideas on what individuals (kids) can do to help.

Illustrations depicting 'before' and 'after' scenarios provide an easy-to-understand and impactful statement about the long-term effects of global warming. Though the book could be read in just a few sessions, the layout also lends itself to looking at a couple of pages at a time. The contents page is very well laid out to track the ripple effect of climate change across many elements. For example, if reading about coral bleaching, it is easy to find the page on rising ocean levels to understand how they affect each other. The book also cross references page numbers in this way, so it is easy to go back and refresh your memory of the concepts that affect the current topic of focus.

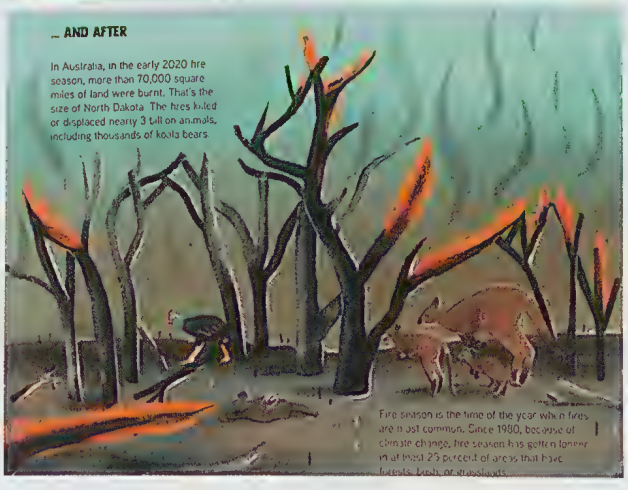
The index and glossary are well thought out. The latter does a remarkable job of reducing wordy or complex concepts into short, well-defined and easy-to-understand sentences. The combination of actionable items described in the book, as well as the sections 'Spread the word' and 'Get involved' at the end, give children purpose and suggest measures they can take, as well as making them feel part of a larger community that is trying to make things better.



Some caregivers shy away from talking or teaching about climate change as it is, understandably, a subject that can provoke deep anxiety in children. *Our World Out of Balance* blends statistical information, activities for children and a description of what other people are doing to foster a sense of hope and give children, and those reading to them, a deeper understanding of the issues involved in man-made climate change.

32-year-old **Camilla St Bird** is an avid gardener with a background in, and passion for, children's education.

BEFORE
Some plants need fire to survive. They grow again out of their own ashes. Lodgepole pine trees, for example, have seeds that are held in their cones by a drop of resin. The seeds only fall out when a fire's heat melts the resin.
Every year, nearly 13 million square miles of the planet's land burns. That's an area bigger than India


...AND AFTER
In Australia, in the early 2020 fire season, more than 70,000 square miles of land were burnt. That's the size of North Dakota. The fires killed or displaced nearly 3 billion animals, including thousands of koala bears.
Fire season is the time of the year when fires are most common. Since 1980, because of climate change, fire season has gotten longer in at least 25 percent of areas that have

For the bookshelf

Edited by Aedeen Cremin and Julie Campbell, *A Garden History of Yass Town*

Yass Books, 2021, available at the National Library of Australia and State Libraries of NSW and Victoria

This privately published compendium of vignettes from 30 gardens in Yass, NSW provides a glimpse into different domestic garden styles and approaches undertaken over many decades. The booklet is illustrated with historical images and family snaps. A brief historical context introduces the difficulties of gardening in the harsh Yass climate, and in a place a long way from specialist gardening suppliers. This overview is followed by a 'warts and all' description of gardening mistakes regretted and horticultural successes celebrated.

Some of the properties retain historic plantings that have been used as a basis for re-imagined gardens connecting to the past. Other gardens are thoroughly modern, eschewing lawns and concentrating on native species. Many rely on the tried-and-tested tough favourite exotics of old country gardens. Landscape gardeners were used in the creation of a few; while others grew like topsy, heavily dependent on their owners' personal preferences and what plants were readily available and grew well. The gardens show a strong reliance on roses, iris, lavender and other dependable plants that can survive Yass's hot, dry climate. Trees for shade and as cherished landmark features are important in all the gardens, as are hedges at boundaries. Vegetable plots and orchard areas are also common elements. The gardening aspirations and individual experiences recounted in the growing of plants to create private horticultural paradises are ones every gardener can relate to.

As an exercise in recording different approaches to gardening in a small country town this book can provide inspiration for the documentation of what is an overlooked aspect of garden history – the development of everyday domestic gardens for families, rather than grand estates or showpiece grounds developed with seemingly inexhaustible funds. This anthology is unmistakably a community production and it would be unfair to compare it to one of those glossy coffee table books. However, other towns seeking to record their domestic garden history might benefit from having a standard format to better guide and unify writing styles and gardening stories.

Anne Claoue-Long is a passionate gardener and active member of the ACT Monaro Riverina branch of the AGHS.

AUSTRALIAN GARDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

The 42nd Australian Garden History Society Inc. online Annual General Meeting will be held on

Sunday 14 November 2021, 10am AEDT

All members are warmly invited to attend, online meeting details to follow.

As proposed by the Australian Garden History Society National Management Committee, the following special resolution will be considered and if thought fit, passed:

"That the Constitution of the Australian Garden History Society, in the form presented at the 2021 Annual General Meeting by the National Management Committee, be adopted as the Australian Garden History Society Constitution in substitution for and to the exclusion of the existing Constitution."

NOTE This is a special resolution and must be passed by three quarters of members who are present at the meeting and entitled to vote on the resolution and who do vote, in accordance with section 23(1) of the Association Incorporation Act 2009 (NSW) and Rules 30, 31, 31 A. and 32 of the current Constitution.

A copy of the proposed replacement Constitution is available on the Society's website **www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au** or please contact our national office on 0419 977 703 or by email on **info@gardenhistorysociety.org.au**

The AGM will be followed by guest speaker and former NMC Chair Richard Heathcote, who will talk about The Blade Australia's love affair with the lawn.

Reviews and more coming online

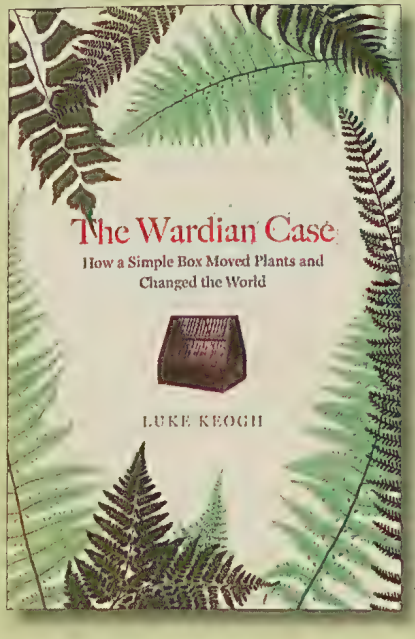
As editor I receive notifications from book publishers about new releases most weeks. Often there's a book coming out that I think would interest *AGH* readers but these pages are already committed. So instead of ignoring them, we've decided to set up a review section on the website where you will be able to learn about other new publications.

The website also allows scope for bringing you reports and articles that are too long to publish in *AGH*, like Alistair Watt's 'Plant hunting in the Pacific'. This paper draws on Watt's analysis of Charles Moore's diary documenting his voyage on HMS *Havannah* in 1850, his and others' subsequent collection and cultivation of plants from the South Pacific, and Watt's own travels.

Given the current popularity of indoor plants, I have chosen an extract from the paper that reminds us plant crazes are not new.

> Another important collector, as far as the Sydney Botanic Gardens was concerned, was John Gould Veitch a scion of the famous British nursery firm. The young JG Veitch spent time in the South Pacific in the years between 1864 and 1866 in pursuit for new hothouse plants, a specialty of the Veitchs. On the strong recommendation of Charles Moore himself, Veitch grabbed an opportunity in 1865 to join a scientific party on board the HMS *Curacoa* that followed a similar itinerary to the exploration voyage to the Pacific islands undertaken by the *Havannah* some 15 years earlier. The live plant collections made by John Veitch were extensive and of high quality and there can be little doubt that he passed some of these onto Moore in the Sydney Gardens as a return favour for the kindness shown by the latter on the Englishman's arrival in the colony.
>
> The collections of John Veitch, from native gardens and the wild, brought some beautiful new species into cultivation in Australia and Britain, such as the copperleaf (*Acalpha wilkesiana*) and false aralia (*Schefflera elegantissima* or *Aralia elegantissima*), now the well-known indoor plants of our garden centres, and…of course the burgundy-colored *Cordyline fruticosa* variety 'Mooreana' (as *Dracaena mooreana*), specifically named for Charles Moore.

Stroobant, P, *Dracaena moorei* Hort. Veitch, lithograph, 1867, courtesy Missouri Botanical Garden Library



Portable greenhouses or Wardian cases, named after their inventor Nathaniel Bagshaw Ward, were used to transport plants, including the exotic finds from the South Pacific, around the globe. During the Victorian mania for ferns, they were also used display the plants inside fashionable homes. The new section on the website has a review of Luke Keogh's book *The Wardian Case: How a simple box moved plants and changed the world*, (University of Chicago Press).

Take a look at **Garden History Now** on the website.

Landscapes – always at risk

Wombat Park, spring 2014, looking west, showing tapestry hedge adjacent to the residence (left), the mature old gardens south past the croquet lawn, a much-reduced productive garden to the north. Image Simon Griffiths

Wombat Park, a rural estate in Daylesford, Victoria has long been on the radar of groups concerned with protecting Victoria's built and horticultural heritage. Efforts to have this property given State-level recognition continue to this day. It is on the Australian Garden History Society's *Landscape at Risk* register.

In the years following the Second World War, citizens concerned with the serious loss of heritage places across Australia found a model in the National Trust in Britain to guide their advocacy efforts. On 11 September 1956, the inaugural meeting of Victoria's National Trust was held in Wilson Hall at the University of Melbourne. Three years later its members numbered 475; the first newsletter was issued in June 1959. The Articles of Association of the National Trust Victoria (NTV) included reference to conservation and preservation of 'special places attached to them (built places) and of places of natural beauty and the flora and fauna thereof'. In 1960 the Landscape Preservation Council was formed to focus on these latter aspects.

By 1965 *Wombat Park* had under gone assessment and classification by the NTV but this seems to have been confined to the buildings. In late 1978 the NTV's Photographic Committee made a brief reference to the grounds at *Wombat Park*, under an entry for the classification of the 1860 Stables:

> *The magnificent grounds of Wombat Park were noted as early as 1886 in the* Picturesque Atlas of Australasia *edited by the Honourable Andrew Garran.*

Florence Montgomerie Brooke, a granddaughter of WE Stanbridge, the estate's first settler, inherited *Wombat Park* when her father, Herbert Montgomerie Standish Cox, died in 1944. Cox was the son of Edward King Cox, of Fernhill, Mulgoa, NSW. * In the mid-1970s, the NTV approached Brooke about including *Wombat Park* in *Historic Gardens of Australia*, but she was not in favour, perhaps believing it would draw unwanted attention. *Wombat Park* does appear in the landmark book by Peter Watts, *Historic Gardens of Victoria* (1983), which received funding from the government of Rupert Hamer, who initiated many actions in support of the garden state.

By 1990, the NTV was paying more attention to gardens. It formed a Gardens Committee and in October 1991 had classified 'the entire property' of *Wombat Park*. In 1995 the Twentieth Century Buildings Committee recommended the property (a new house had been built between 1910 and 1912) be nominated to the Historic Buildings Council and the Gardens Committee had created its own classification report.

Horticulturist Miffy Gilbert created a hugely significant analysis in 1993/94 of *Wombat Park*, documented in her thesis, 'Conservation Analysis and Management Plan, Wombat Park, Daylesford', completed as part of her Bachelor of Applied Science (Horticulture) at the University of Melbourne. Gilbert had been aware of the property through her mother's interest in the various choral activities held on the grounds. She provided the thesis to the NTV with a warning about the risks to the property following the death of Standish Brooke (great grandson of WE Stanbridge) in 1993, and the family's subsequent intention to sell. In early 1995, the NTV did approach the Australian Heritage Commission seeking some urgency be applied to adding *Wombat Park* to the Register of the National Estate (RNE). *Wombat Park* appears in the RNE archive as ID 100064, but no date of registration is visible. *Wombat Park*is not on the current Australian National Heritage List (successor to the RNE, which was closed in 2007).

Standish Brooke's mother, Florence Montgomerie, had let the place run wild in her later years (she died in 1992) and he had had to spend significant

* The efforts to preserve this cultural landscape were discussed in *AGH* vol.32, no. 4, April 2021 https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/product/agh-vol-32-no-4-april-2021/

effort from 1986 clearing away the undergrowth and breathing new life into the four-seasons garden before his untimely death by his own hand in 1993. Only shortly before, AGHS had been scheduled to support Standish in a very practical way, by conducting a working bee. Helen Page, pioneer and champion of AGHS working bees in Victoria, has suggested the scale of the task confronting Standish and the prospect of doing so alone played a part in his suicide.

In 1995, the AGHS's Victorian Branch Secretary Karen Olsen also formally raised with the NTV the potential risks of changing ownership. In March 1997 Heritage Victoria advised the new owner of *Wombat Park*, Isabel Mackenzie, it had accepted a nomination to include the property on the Victorian Heritage Register. This inclusion did not eventuate, with the NTV being notified only in 2013 that the original submission lacked certain information required by section 28 of the *Heritage Act 1995*.

Fortunately, Helen Page and members of the working bees were able to establish a strong relationship with Mackenzie during her tenure. Together with her gardener, Stewart Henderson, Mackenzie was the prime mover in continuing renovation of the gardens, while AGHS ran working bees there from the early 1990s until 2017, when Mackenzie died.

In 2015 Miffy Gilbert was supported by the AGHS to review and extend the original 1994 survey of the garden. With the news in 2019 that the property was once more to be sold, AGHS prepared a submission to Heritage Victoria based heavily on Gilbert's extensive documentation.

Enter the pandemic in early 2020. This meant Heritage Victoria could not carry out the site assessment that is part of the overall evaluation of a recommended property. Then, in late 2020, *Wombat Park* was put up for sale by tender arousing the same anxieties as when the Stanbridge family was about to sell the property in the 1990s. This sale process was inconclusive but is scheduled to be replaced by a public auction in late 2021. At the time of writing it is not clear whether Heritage Victoria will be able to present their recommendation for registration or otherwise before that time. Bidders will at least be aware of the live submission.

This account is an example of why advocacy in the heritage space can never really end: changing times and changing owners can always present new challenges. It also shows the various manifestations such advocacy can take: working in formal groups such as AGHS and NTV, for example by making formal submissions to government; directly supporting owners with hands-on gardening events; raising awareness through open house and garden events. All demonstrate the value provided to the community by these special places.

Trevor Pitkin is a researcher, writer and photographer, who is interested in the built and natural environments, especially those that sit well together.

Anne Vales' brief history of the garden at *Wombat Park* is available at a discount for AGHS members: **https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/product/garden-history-the-garden-at-wombat-park**

Left The garden at *Wombat Park* in the 1920s, showing the scale of the grand tree specimens reaching back to WE Stanbridge's days in the mid-19th century. Photographer unknown, image courtesy the Brooke family

Right A view to the southeast taken in 1934 that shows the new residence surrounded by the new formal garden and productive garden, with the old garden and parkland paddock in the background. Photographer unknown

Greenmount arbour restored

JUDY FERRIER

The AGHS Queensland branch celebrated the Society's 40th anniversary by offering a grant to restore heritage gardens in the state. The Greenmount Historical Homestead (circa 1908) near Mackay won the grant to replace an arbour with a replica of the original that had graced the entrance to the circular driveway of the homestead. The property was gifted to council in 1983 by Tom and Dorothy Cook, son and daughter-in-law of the original owners, Albert and Vida Cook. Vida was an avid gardener, noted for her spectacular caladiums and arum lilies, which she grew in her fernery. Mature palms and milky pines still provide shade across the lawn as does an enormous mango tree planted in the 1930s.

AGHS Queensland representative, Ann Wegener, together with the Mayor of Mackay, Greg Williamson, officiated at the opening and planted two *Pandora jasminoides* native vines, which will trail over the gateway. Photo Lee Brake

Silent Space and the pandemic

LIZ WARE

Who could have imagined when we met at the AGHS Conference in 2019, what lay ahead? Then, Silent Space in the United Kingdom had great plans. (See on the AGHS website Ware's 2020 article about her initiative to encourage public gardens to reserve an area for silent visiting and reflection.) Like everyone else, we've put them 'on hold'. Instead, we're savouring the few things we have achieved, often against the odds. We now have charity status and we still have 60 gardens and organisations working with us. There's plenty to celebrate.

During the first lockdown, all UK gardens taking part in Silent Space closed. When they reopened, many staff were still on furlough, visitor numbers were restricted and one-way systems were in operation. Few of the spaces could operate at their best. We sat tight and waited.

The Silent Space at Trewithen Gardens, Cornwall, photo copyright Liz Ware

On your side of the world, things were different. Dunedin Botanic Garden's Silent Space Trail Map proved to be a prize winner at the Interpretation Media Awards ceremony in the United States. The Youth Community Greening Program at Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney started experimenting with spaces for quiet reflection at three schools in the Sydney area. Your positive news kept us going.

We didn't realise that something important was also happening here. Restricted to one hour of outdoor exercise a day, people fortunate to have a local green space began to relish the beauty of a near perfect spring. When gardens reopened, head gardeners noticed that many first-time visitors quickly became regulars and that a proportion of these were much younger than the usual garden visiting demographic.

Earlier this year, *The Telegraph* (UK) newspaper's gardening section published an article about Silent Space. We've noticed a steady increase in the number of visitors to the website ever since. As an appreciation of nature blossomed during the thick of the pandemic, so too did a curiosity about the benefits of being silent in it. Watch this space!

Profile

JANET O'HEHIR – Camperdown campaigner

Earlier this year, Camperdown Botanic Gardens and Arboretum Trust Inc Secretary Janet O'Hehir was awarded a 2020 Handbury Award 'for remarkable dedication to advocacy, education and garden development and for the indomitable spirit she brings to the gardens'. This national award is named in honour of the late Geoff Handbury AO, a major benefactor of the Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc (AAFBG). She explains how she became involved.

Janet O'Hehir, photo Grant Wood

One afternoon in the early 2000s, not long after we had moved to Camperdown in southwest Victoria, I ran into Richard Barley in our botanic garden. I knew him as the Director of Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne. On this afternoon he had stopped by for a quick visit on his way home from Warrnambool after a meeting of Botanic Gardens Australia and New Zealand (BGANZ). We got into a conversation and I mentioned I was studying a Masters in Urban Horticulture at Burnley. 'Why don't you start up a friends' group here?', Richard asked me. The place was obviously not receiving any love and needed someone to care about its future. But I'd heard the local council had no funds available for the gardens and had no desire to start a campaign to challenge that. That changed in 2012, when the gardens were listed on the Victorian Heritage Register and a community planning exercise showed the locals wanted to see it better looked after. So I got involved.

I am driven by two things: the beauty of the place and the visitors' appreciation. It's not hard with a bit of knowledge, skill and effort to make the garden more beautiful, and it's so worthwhile when you see the place being enjoyed. People are always coming up to tell me how much they love what we've done. They ask about the plants, they show their kids the flowers opening or the insects or trees, they bring their elderly mum or their baby for her first birthday photos, or their families for weddings or birthdays or other special occasions, and they ask about joining in our working bees. No-one's making money out of it. It's a public place there for beauty and learning and enjoyment, even more appreciated in these times of COVID when more and more people are waking up to the importance of public gardens.

In 2021, we are pleased with the way the Botanic Gardens are growing but would still like to see the Arboretum restored to a beautiful public park. While the volunteers are willing to participate in gardening and to engage with the purpose of the gardens, their efforts need to be led and coordinated through a better arrangement for collaboration with the council's parks and gardens staff.

Community engagement with the gardens has benefits for everyone – learning about plants and the environment, participating in healthy exercise, developing a sense of ownership and pride, being part of a group. We can't stand back and allow expediency and privatisation to take that away or allow our public gardens to just be 'maintained' with a minimal spray, mow and blow regime.

Thirteen years on and the conservation and improvement of the Camperdown Botanic Gardens and Arboretum is something I'm closely involved in. Richard Barley is now the Director of Horticulture and Learning at London's Kew Gardens. He is still a supporter and visits us to check up on progress and join us for a picnic in the gardens whenever he comes home.

Inside view

Thank you once again for your kind words of support and generous donations in response to the cancellation of our face-to-face Sydney conference due the COVID-19 Delta strain outbreak. Chaired by Christine Hay, the remarkable Sydney Conference Committee deserves our admiration and praise for organising, postponing and reviving the conference, then within only a few months, switching formats to virtual. Such was the quality and appeal of the program they devised, all who participated agreed it was exceptional in content and presentation. For those unable to participate, the lectures and Q&A discussions are now available for purchase on our website. When it is safe to do so, we hope to see you at the garden visits and tours originally intended as part of the conference.

Despite the frustrations we have had to navigate through the pandemic, the Society has been working on various initiatives, including a new constitution. We would like to thank all those who have volunteered their precious time to bring our constitution up to date so that it aligns with contemporary needs.

We look forward to 'meeting' you online for our Annual General Meeting on 14 November to review the year and greet new members to the national management committee. While it is sad to see people go, it is a good opportunity for fresh ideas and energy: so welcome!

Hazel King OAM in Cowra, NSW, May 2021, photo Ralph Suter

Other business continues to be conducted in cyberspace, such as UNESCO's 44th World Heritage Committee, which met online in July. The committee urged Australia to take accelerated action to address the threat of climate change to the Great Barrier Reef. It also added gardens and landscapes to the World Heritage List, including Roberto Burle Marx's Sitio's home and experimental estate in Rio de Janeiro; Paseo del Prado and Buen Retiro Park in the heart of Madrid; the Great Spas of Europe in seven cities, including their landscaping; and the agricultural living landscapes for the not well-to-do Netherlands/Belgian serial listing of Colonies of Benevolence.

It was a joy to learn that AGHS member Hazel King has received a richly deserved OAM for her service to the community and horticulture. Many of you may know Hazel as a teacher at Ryde TAFE or through her articles and advice in the Garden Clubs of Australia magazine *Our Gardens* or as a driving force in the Berry and District Garden Club. Born to a horticulturist who worked at *Yaralla Estate*, one of Australia's largest 19th-century estates, Hazel continues to catch public transport to Concord in Sydney to be a valued tour-guide on the estate's open days. Hazel recently donated copies of photos of her childhood at *Yaralla* to the Canada Bay Heritage Society. 2021 also saw the publication of a luscious book on Berry's trees, penned by Hazel with Peter Millthorpe, which we highly recommend. It can be purchased online at **https://treesofhistoricberry.com**

Gardening certainly helps cultivate sanity. As spring explodes in our parks, gardens and landscapes we are reminded of the excitement and hope that comes with this season. We both look forward to the time when we can again spend time together in our precious landscapes and treasured gardens.

Stuart Read and Bronwyn Blake, Co-Chairs

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria
RBG00024348

Publication

Australian Garden History, the official journal of the Australian Garden History Society, is published quarterly.

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ISSN 1033-3673

Text © individual contributors
Images © as individually credited
Design and typography
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Subscriptions (GST INCLUSIVE)

Membership	1 year	3 years
Individual	$78	$211
Household (2 adults & 2 children)	$117	$351
Corporate	$265	$795
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1/8 page	$400
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AUSTRALIAN GARDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

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The views expressed in this journal are those of the contributors and are not necessarily shared by the Australian Garden History Society.

Getting to know them

stories from the AGHS national oral history collection

This interview with **Trisha Dixon**, *inter alia* editor of *Australian Garden History* from 1995 to 2000, reveals Dixon's indefatigable energy and profound attachment to her home at *Bobundara* on Monaro in southern NSW.

I'm speaking from the land of the Ngarigo people and in fact they named *Bobundara* – it means 'place of thunder', which is very apt because it never rains but when it does, it's just thunder and lightning. It's very dramatic… I'm living in this incredible landscape that is so, so ancient. I always reference and I always think of the people that were here before.

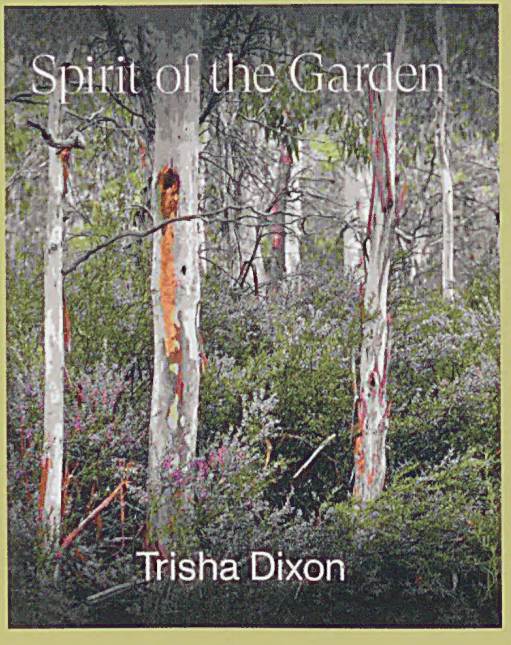
This interview with you is part of the 40th anniversary of the Society, which is quite an achievement for any organisation. How did you discover the Society?

I wasn't a founding member at all, it was really moving down here to *Bobundara*, … [to an] old house, old garden, and I didn't want to get it wrong, so I wrote a letter, … I had Peter Watts's book on *Historic Gardens of Victoria,* and I wrote to him … I think he was the Chair then…

I think being a member of the Garden History Society, well, I have to say, apart from the fact that Peter and Jo Watts are some of my very, very, very dearest, closest friends … I have learned almost every tiny little thing I know about gardens through being a member of Garden History Society. They're such an incredibly knowledgeable and unassumingly intelligent society of people, and that's why I'd often get upset if I took people on tours and you'd get somewhere and they'd say, 'Ah, you're the garden group, you're the garden club'. And I'd think, 'No, you've got us so wrong'… And that's what I love about it, that we're really gardeners of the mind, it's about the literature, about the music, the art, the landscape, the history, the philosophy, the everything about it, and the gardening's only one part of it. The plants are one small part of it, really, aren't they? … it's about custodianship…

So that's certainly really, really been why I suppose, I've loved being so much involved with Garden History so much, because they're my type of people, they're kind of kindred spirits. And so you talk the same language, and it doesn't matter who you sit next to, you can have a conversation about literature, you can have a good conversation about music or about theatre or about something and it's not just about, do you put the phosphorus on the petunias? Because really, I don't care if I don't prune my things at the right time, I don't dig up my things at the right time. It's the feel of the garden and it's the history and it's a whole lot more than just growing plants, and that's what I find I've got from the Garden History Society…

The interview was conducted in 2020 by Roslyn Burge as part the AGHS's national oral history collection. It is now accessible online as a transcript and recording at: **https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/publications/tricia-dixon/**



Trisha Dixon's latest book ***Spirit of the Garden*** (NLA Publishing, 2021, $65.00), explores, in her words and photographs, the relationship that exists between ourselves, our gardens and the natural landscape. Lisa Tuck begins her review of the book, saying:

> Trisha Dixon has written an extraordinary book straight from her heart. Her beautiful descriptions and potent images…show a very strong connection with landscapes and the feelings they provoke…

Read Lisa Tuck's review on the AGHS website, **Garden History Now**